

**CITY OF SNOHOMISH
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
May 5, 2021**

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 declared federal, state and local emergency, and pursuant to Governor Inslee's Proclamations 20-05 and 20-28, the Snohomish Planning Commission held its meeting via remote participation.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was opened by Chair Hank Eskridge at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

2. FLAG SALUTE

3. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Hank Eskridge, Chair
Terri Lippincott
Gordon Cole
Mitch Cornelison
Van Tormohlen
Nick Gottuso
Christine Wakefield Nichols

STAFF:

Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Brooke Eidem, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Dana, City Council liaison
Judith Kuleta, City Council liaison
Mayor Kartak
Randy Blair, Snohomish County
Morgan Davis, general public
Bob Bengford, MAKERS Architecture

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER

Commissioner Cole moved to approve the agenda order as presented. Commissioner Lippincott seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

5. APPROVAL of the minutes of the April 7, 2021, regular meeting.

Commissioner Cole moved to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2021 meeting as written. Chair Eskridge seconded the motion, which passed 6-0 with Commissioner Lippincott abstaining.

6. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Morgan Davis reported that at the recent City Council meeting a new ad hoc committee was created to lobby the County to provide some of its property on Avenue D for affordable housing, an idea he proposed a year ago in a letter to the Herald. He also asserted the Snohomish Square does not need redevelopment and uprooting all the people in the mobile home park is not right and that what the City needs is another Woodlake Apartments with 3-4 story wood-framed flats.

7. DISCUSSION ITEM: Midtown District Development Regulations and Design Standards Concepts

Mr. Pickus introduced consultant Bob Bengford of MAKERS Architecture and Design, who has delivered draft code language for Midtown based on and supporting the Task Force recommendations. Staff will be reviewing and editing the draft before bringing it to the Planning Commission for discussion. Staff's edits are intended to tailor it for use in Snohomish.

Mr. Bengford presented some of the key code concepts behind the code he drafted, including the block frontage, site planning standards, and building design standards.

Mr. Cornelison asked for examples of other places where the block frontage standards have been used. He was most interested in seeing physical examples to determine how it works in Snohomish. Mr. Bengford said Bothell, Renton Landing, and Newcastle Commons are examples; Mr. Pickus said he will find photo examples and more information for a future discussion.

Chair Eskridge asked about the minimum depth for retail spaces. Mr. Bengford confirmed the depth takes into account the size of a block, but this is one of the standards where a deviation request is possible.

Public art, playgrounds, and open space were discussed. Mr. Bengford said there is currently no provision for public art, and it is uncommon to require a minimum amount of it. Public parks are also not addressed in the draft but requirements for public spaces are. Also, a standard requiring larger residential development to include amenity areas (e.g., a children's play area) is included but those would be private. Mr. Pickus added it might be problematic to require a private developer to create a public park and also pay park impact fees and that any new public parks in Midtown would primarily be developed by the City.

Mr. Gottuso asked about rooftop public spaces. Mr. Bengford noted they are not common, they depend on access and visibility, and they tend to be private.

Ms. Lippincott asked about preservation of significant trees and whether an inventory of the corridor has been done to determine how many significant trees there are. Mr. Pickus was unsure if an inventory has ever been done but suggested most of the significant trees in Midtown may be near the armory at the northern end.

Mr. Cornelison asked about the reduction in landscaped areas for planting areas supporting large trees. If the standard minimum landscaped area is 20% of the overall site, the allowed reduction could potentially be 10% of the site. Mr. Pickus noted there are other open space and landscape standards that would also need to be met, and the intent is to encourage people to plant bigger trees.

Design standards were discussed. Mr. Cornelison asked how departures would be administered. Mr. Pickus said that will be discussed with the Planning Commission at a future meeting, but staff is recommending an administrative process. Mr. Tormohlen asked how a departure request would not result in setting a precedent. Mr. Pickus said there would be specific criteria that need to be met, so it would be processed as another layer of regulation. A requested deviation would only be approved if the criteria are met.

Mr. Pickus went over next steps, which will be more detailed discussion of the draft codes and policies.

Mayor Kartak thanked Mr. Bengford for all the information he provided, and the Planning Commission for asking lots of good questions.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Pickus reported that the Design Review Board is wrapping up its work on the "General Design Standards", currently called the "Design Standards and Guidelines (outside the Historic District)". The City Council will consider and vote on the updated design standards at their next meeting May 18.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved this 2nd day of June, 2021.

By: /s/Terry Lippincott

Commissioner Terry Lippincott, Vice Chair